DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 198 029 SO 013 098

AUTHOR Nicholes, Daniel R.; Kubelick, Cheryl L.
TITLE Creating a Classroom Community.
INSTITUTION Allegheny Intermediate Unit, Pittsburgh, Pa.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.; Pennsylvania State Dept. of Education, Harrisburg.
PUB DATE 79
NOTE 79p.; For related document, see SO 013 099.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Administrator Role; Affective Behavior; *Classroom Communication; *Classroom Environment; Critical Thinking; Elementary Education; *Ethical Instruction; Group Dynamics; *Moral Development; Problem Solving; *Social Development; Teacher Role; *Teaching Methods

ABSTRACT

This manual for elementary school teachers discusses the stages of social reasoning and suggests methods for establishing a classroom and school-wide community to aid students in social reasoning and self-governance. The document contains five sections. Section one focuses on the stages of social reasoning according to William Damon: premoral reasoning (ages 3-5), punishment-reward reasoning (ages 5-8), moral relativity (ages 8-12), and mutual expectations (ages 11-17). Part II introduces the dilemma story approach as an initial means for students to explore ethical questions. Following an example of a dilemma story, the teaching process is outlined. It includes confronting the dilemma, identifying the best action, reasoning, and reflection. Students work out their solutions in groups. Section three, Creating a Classroom Community, discusses ethical questions in the daily operation of the classroom. The section also identifies three phases for establishing a classroom community. Phase one involves a three-week training program; in phase two, students organize into small club groups. Phase three involves twice-a-week meetings and continues throughout the year. Section IV identifies the roles of the teacher as designer, implementer, and promoter in the classroom community. The final section extends classroom community concepts to the school level and focuses on the role of the principal. (KC)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED198029

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
RISE

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

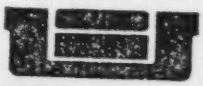
SP 013 098

Creating a Classroom Community

community involvement for responsible citizenship (Circ)

Daniel R. Nicholes
Cheryl L. Kubelick

Allegheny Intermediate Unit



Instructional Support Services

Dr. Harold E. Oyer, Executive Director
Dr. Therese T. Walter, Assistant Executive Director

Suite 1300, Two Allegheny Center
Pittsburgh, PA 15212

The activity which is the subject of this report was supported in whole or in part by the United States Office of Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S.O.E. or the Pennsylvania Department of Education and no official endorsement by the U.S.O.E. or the P.D.E. should be inferred.

Table of Contents

	Page:
Introduction	1
I. The Development of Social Reasoning	5
II. The Dilemma Story Approach	14
III. Creating a Classroom Community	29
IV. The Roles of the Teacher in the Classroom Community	52
V. A Principal's Guide for Creating a School Community	66

It is fundamental to the human organism to make meaning of our world. Everyone achieves this regardless of age or intelligence. Our meaning-making ability distinguishes us as human.

We seem to make meaning of our world in a systematic fashion. The systems which we create -- classification systems, naming systems, conceptual systems -- comprise the devices which give meaning and security to our existence. A table is always a table. But our reality is more than its objective existence. While a table is always a table, one person's fool is another's prophet. In the social world, the same opportunity, situation, rule or interaction can have quite different meanings to different people. And this is so even when two of us agree on our terms such as "fool" and "prophet".

Human behavior often seems mysterious from the point of view of the casual observer, but downright chaotic from the point of view of those who must deal with it on a daily basis. Teachers are among the latter group. They watch their students think through problems of social interaction in an apparently rational fashion, and then take action on that reflection in wildly inappropriate ways.

"Why did you hit her, Glen?" the teacher asks.

"She touched my eraser!" the child responded.

"So is that any reason to hit her? Hasn't she borrowed things from you before?"

"Yeah, but this time I saw her and I got her back!"

Another common observation of teachers consists of apparent student growth away from respect for others and obedience to authority and toward cynical disregard for the rights of fellow students and a malevolent attitude toward school rules.

"I don't know what happens between second and fifth grade. They just get crazy. Maybe it's something in the water!"

As teachers, knowledge of the meaning systems of our students puts us at an advantage. Having the knowledge of meaning systems would give some insight into the motivation for what often seem to be absurd, inappropriate and irrational actions. We would know better how our teaching styles and content complement the meaning-making systems of our students. We could offer knowledge in a compatible way. We might even find ways to stretch our students meaning-making systems -- to use new systems which they have not encountered before.

On the other hand, some feel that attempt at this kind of understanding may have some disadvantages, as well. Such understanding is very theoretical. Carrying all the theory that attends this understanding process is cumbersome baggage. While possibly worthwhile, some suggest that it obscures one's focus on the daily exigencies of education. Even knowing the theory, many feel that little can be done to make a difference. Teacher time and energy they, suggest, may be more profitably spent in endeavors that make a more readily identifiable difference: for example, teaching knowledge and skills. And finally, intervention in human interaction deals too much with the affective realm of feelings, which some suggest is an inappropriate realm for the schools.

This manual for teachers takes the view that such knowledge makes a better teacher and that its advantages of insight outweigh its disadvantages of increased baggage and occasional feelings of futility. The question of dealing with the so-called affective domain is one of dealing with the whole child, i.e., it cannot be avoided. The satisfaction in learning which a student achieves is at least as important as the knowledge and skills acquired.

Several developmental psychologists provide the intellectual structure for the teaching approaches described in this manual. Lawrence Kohlberg of Harvard is the best known. His work has taken the foundation of Jean Piaget into the realm of moral development. The six stages of cognitive moral development have found their way into the popular press, resulting in some fadism and reaction surrounding his views.

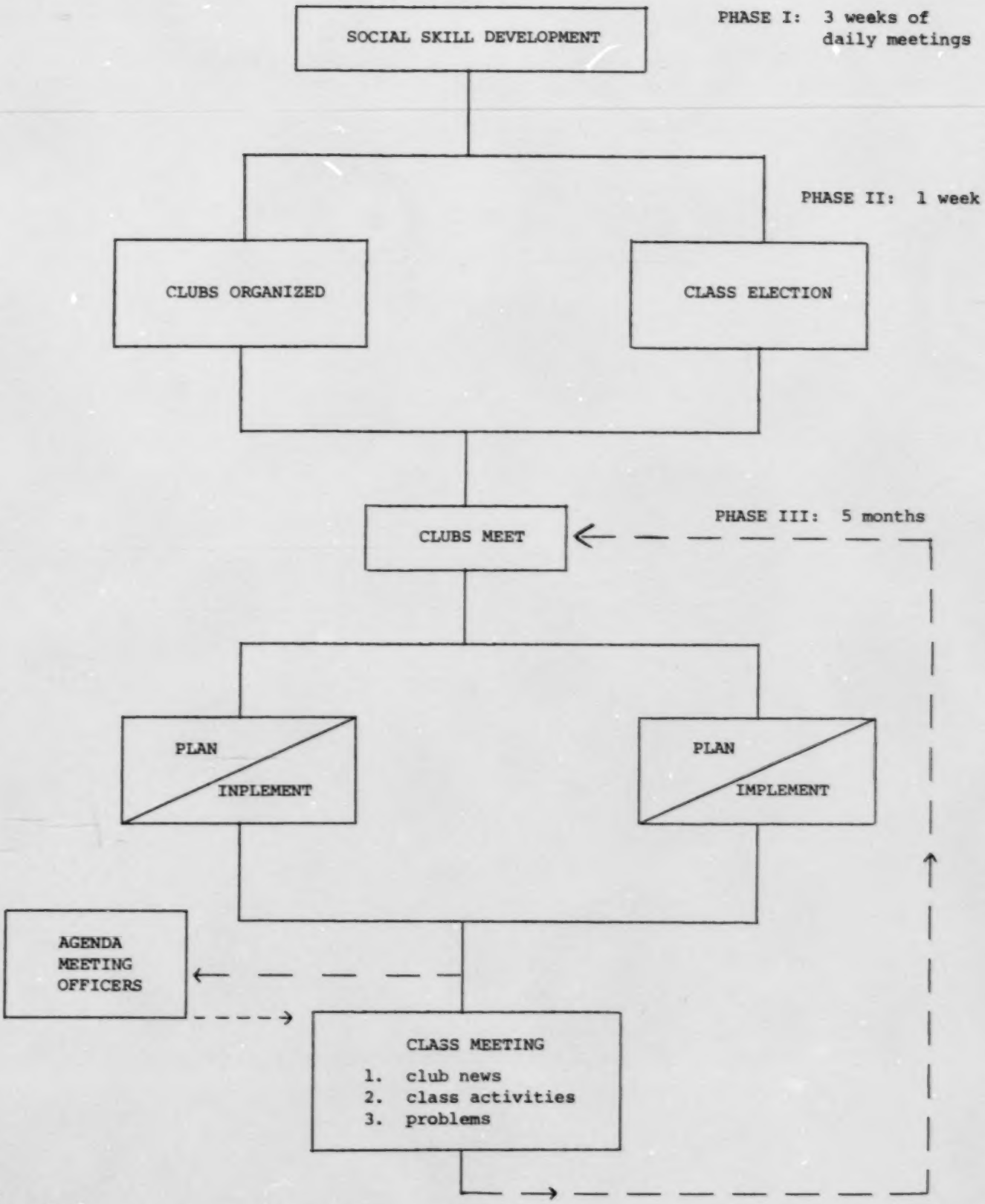
Somewhat less well known but more important for the elementary teacher is the work of William Damon of Clarke University. Damon's stages of social development parallel Kohlberg's and will be described at some length in the first part of the manual. This section prepares the teacher for a better understanding of her or his students' social development, the styles they use in their social interaction, and the bases of their judgement in social decision-making.

Subsequent sections of the manual suggest ways in which the teacher may help students exercise their social judgement in the safe setting of the school. Part two starts the teacher with a dilemma story approach, the simplest and safest social reasoning strategy. Parts three and four describe ways to offer students opportunities for real social decision-making through school activities and through a self-governing community within the classroom. The final section of the manual suggests a larger structure for creation of a school-wide advisory representative community which will confront questions of school governance with the principal.

The purposes of this manual, then, are twofold. First, it provides the interested teacher with a fundamental understanding of cognitive developmental social reasoning. Second, it suggests a program through which an elementary teacher or an entire elementary school can utilize their understanding of social reasoning, nurture the growth of children's social reasoning, and operationalize responsible self-governance in the classroom. The following diagram describes the chronological steps of implementing such a program. The last section of the manual speaks more directly to implementation and administration of a classroom community which comprehends and integrates all facets at the developmental approach.

Diagram #1

INTERVENTION CHART



I. The Development of Social Reasoning

There is little doubt that 5-year-olds make social decisions differently from 15-year-olds or 25-year-olds. If they did not we would have little need of a conception of childhood. However, until recently, observers of childhood tended to idealize the naivete of children, bemoaning the child's growing sophistication and maturity, or they viewed children as mistaken (if not malevolent) in their social relations, a condition requiring correction by adults. Only within the past 50 or 100 years has the view emerged that the social state of childhood represents a natural one in which the child functions quite well, but one of continuing change or development.

This latter assumption underlies developmental views of social reasoning. Growing out of personality theory, theories of social development see children as persons with functioning philosophies for dealing with others from a very early age. Of course, the children cannot articulate these philosophies, but the trained observer can distinguish them through the decisions which children make in their social worlds and through the consequent actions and justifications of those decisions.

The basis of modern work in cognitive developmental views of social reasoning rests on the work of Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget. Lawrence Kohlberg has provided the seminal applicative work of Piaget in the area of cognitive moral development. The description of stages and reasoning in this chapter derive principally from the work of William Damon, rather than Kohlberg, because of Damon's work with children of elementary school age. Kohlberg has concerned himself more particularly with senior high school and college students. Those who wish to pursue the contribution of each of the theorists should refer to the bibliography at the end of this manual.

Table 1 lists the stages of social reasoning according to Damon. The stage descriptions are general in the table and examples of each will make the stages and substages more meaningful through the attendant behavior dictated by each. A situation in which many children find themselves will offer opportunities for the differing stages of reasoning.

> Two boys decided to sell lemonade on a summer day in order to make some money. One boy, Bill, had some lemons, so the other boy, Dale, took some money that he had saved and bought the sugar and paper cups. They made the lemonade and set up the stand, but no one came all morning. The boys went home for lunch.
>
> After lunch, Dale decided to play ball with other friends. Bill, however, continued at the lemonade stand, joined by his little brother, Jay. Jay found a group of workers at a construction site and invited them to buy lemonade. The workers purchased all the lemonade, putting the stand out of business.
>
> As Bill and Jay cleaned up the pitcher and took down the stand, Dale returned, demanding his share of the profits.
>
> How should the boys divide the money?*

A person who reasons at the premoral stage of reasoning, Stage 0, will seek to satisfy personal desire through the decision required above. Such a reasoner would likely respond that the person in the story most like the reasoner should receive the most money. The reasoning he or she employs -- if one can term such reasoning -- reiterates that the subject desires that outcome.

"The boys should give the most money to Jay, the little brother."

Why?

"Because he wants the money."

*This dilemma is the subject of an excellent 16mm motion picture film, "The Lemonade Stand" by Encyclopedia Britannica Educational Exploration.

Table 1: Stages of Social Reasoning

Stage 0: Premoral Reasoning (ages 3-5)

Substage 0-A: Justice equates with personal desire.

Substage 0-B: Just acts equate with personal desire but can be justified through physical characteristics.

Stage 1: Punishment-Reward Reasoning (ages 5-8)

Substage 1-A: Right acts are rewarded, wrong are punished, and all receive equal punishments or rewards.

Substage 1-B: Right and wrong derive from the good or bad intentions of the actor and from reciprocity of acts.

Stage 2: Moral Relativity (ages 8-12)

Substage 2-A: Persons can have different but valid reasons for the same actions.

Substage 2-B: Seeming conflict between equality and reciprocity can be coordinated by taking into account the claims of persons and demands of specific situations.

Stage 3: Mutual Expectations (ages 11-17)

Substage 3-A: Beyond the tradeoffs created by two individuals, the situation itself contains elements of fairness.

Substage 3-B: Fairness and justice are parts of oneself making one a good or bad person in the eyes of important others.

As the Stage 0 reasoner becomes more adept at justifying choices, he or she becomes capable of justifying choice on the basis of some readily identifiable physical characteristic. However, the motivation remains the satisfaction of personal desires.

> "Give the money to the little brother. He wants the money because he just got some new shoes."

As the child begins to differentiate justice from personal desire, he or she develops a growing attachment to equality as the resolver of questions of distribution. Without regard to circumstance or intent, all persons should share equally. Each person represents a distinct entity in competition for rewards in a fundamentally similar fashion. Consequently, concrete equality in distribution is fair because it represents the sameness that all persons have in the distribution of rewards.

> "All three boys should divide the money equally."
>
> What about Dale? Does he deserve an equal share even though he didn't work as hard?
>
> "Yes. They should all get the same."
>
> How about Jay, the younger brother? He is smaller, and maybe does not need as much as the bigger boys.
>
> "No. They should all get the same. Jay deserves an equal share, too."

All share equally in the conflict situation, so all must share equally in its resolution.

The arbitrary nature of reasoning at Substage 1-A gives way to a system of reciprocity at Substage 1-B. At this substage, the child recognizes that equality of acts can be extended over time. One has an obligation to repay a good act or reward with another. Conversely, a bad act requires "getting even" and this is just. Significantly, such a reasoner recognizes that there are deserving claims requiring attention, whereas the reasoner at Substage 1-A found that all parties to a conflict required an equal share.

"Bill and Jay should get equal shares because they worked most. Dale should get some money too, but less than Bill and Jay."

Why?

"Dale didn't work as much as Bill and Jay."

But aren't Bill and Dale friends?

"Yes, but Dale didn't stay and help his friend work. Jay did. So Jay will get what Dale would have."

The more mature child who reasons at Stage 2-A has extended his notion of equality of acts to include equality of persons. Since all people are equal, they should be treated equally, even though that may mean that the claim of each person may not be the same. Rewards or resources should be apportioned to recognize that equality of persons. And, because all people are equal, there may be several morally acceptable outcomes to a problem.

A special view of the needs of others develops in the child who uses Stage 2-A reasoning because of the view of equality of persons. Needs become a special form of inequality which can be overcome by the apportionment of resources:

"Jay and Bill should get most of the money because they worked harder than Dale."

Suppose that Dale really needed the money. Suppose his family didn't have very much money, and he didn't get an allowance.

"That wasn't in the story, was it?"

Just pretend it was.

"Hm. That might be different."

How would that be different?

"If he really needs the money -- like if his family is poor -- then he should get more money."

Why is that a good idea, to give Dale some more money?

"Well, they should, you know. I mean they don't have to, but they can if they want to, then they should. Everybody should get some money. If Dale doesn't get an allowance, he should get some more -- maybe a dollar more. If he doesn't get an allowance and Bill and Jay do, then Dale deserves to get more money."

The person who reasons at Stage 2-A will often try to reward the "best" claim with the greatest portion. The reasoner views this apportionment as a recognition of the "rightness" of the claim and simultaneously a means of maintaining or moving toward a balance of equality for all persons.

The plurality of claims distinguishes the Stage 2-A reasoner, and Stage 2-B reasoning deals with conflict situations through recognition of many claims, as well. However, the 2-B reasoner differs from Stage 2-A in that the more mature reasoner can recognize that some kinds of claims hold no pertinence to the conflict under discussion.

Would it matter if Dale came from a poor family and didn't get an allowance?

"No. He still should get less than Jay or Bill. They did the work, Dale did not. I mean, everybody feels bad that Dale is poor, but it wouldn't be fair to Bill and Jay to give Dale more."

While such reasoning sounds similar to that of Stage 1-B reasoning, it differs. At the lower stage, the reasoner distinguishes only among those who have claims and those who do not. At Stage 2-B the more sophisticated reasoner recognizes that Dale, Bill, and Jay all have claims, but differentiates between pertinent claims -- Bill and Jay sold most of the lemonade -- and impertinent claims -- Dale has little money.

When a child makes the transition from Stage 2 to Stage 3 reasoning, he or she enters the realm of adult reasoning. In Piagetian terms, such reasoning requires formal operations -- abstract thinking. At Stage 3-A, the reasoner recognizes that situations contain elements of fairness and justice. A situation may require fair action, independent of the claims of the individuals facing conflict.

"You know, when people start a business they decide how to split the profits. Dale bought the cups and sugar and Bill contributed the lemons. So Dale deserves some of the profits. That is too bad for Jay. He worked more than Dale, but he wasn't part of the original deal. Bill can't go back on that deal. If he does, he can't be trusted."

The higher Stage 3-B reasoner generalizes a view of fairness to his or her social world. This world of important other people defines the reasoner's goodness or badness as a person by setting standards which determine socially acceptable behavior. The individual then defines himself or herself in terms of those standards of behavior. This is reflected in concerns for reputation and honor.

"It is like Dale broke his word to Bill when he did not come back after lunch. They went into business to sell lemonade together but then Dale did not do his part."

Elementary school children only rarely achieve Stage 3 reasoning, even though many of the theorists suggest that they are capable of such reasoning at about age 11. The examples of Stage 3 reasoning are included here to demonstrate the direction of growth in which students move.

The sequence of growth through the stages described above has been established through repeated observation and testing. Those who wish to explore the measurement of social reasoning should refer to William Damon's works listed in the bibliography. Developmental psychologists for the most part accept the existence of the stages in the order described. All persons begin at Stage 0 and progress in the described order without skipping any stages. And while one cannot regress in stages, one can stop development at any stage.

The precise processes that each of us experiences in development is still incompletely understood, but general agreement exists that one develops reasoning structures by using them. The chapters which follow present opportunities for students to exercise their decision-making and reasoning capabilities in the relatively safe setting of the classroom.

The teacher's role in these activities is one of facilitator, encouraging the growth of natural processes more thoroughly and more quickly than growth without the teacher's intervention.

An understanding of the developmental processes through which their students are passing will place the teacher in a distinctly advantageous position. Not only will the teacher understand the content of classroom learning, but the process of coming to learn content will begin to emerge. Such teacher understanding is not achieved quickly. There is no checklist of indicators or milestones of moral and intellectual development. Instead, the observant teacher finds that predictable patterns of reasoning take shape among students.

There are certain process skills which teachers can employ. Group dynamics and interaction can be facilitated through the use of certain activities. Teachers will find opportunities for better understanding of students as a result of these activities described later in this manual. However, the teacher should realize that the payoff for student and teacher grows out of the synthesis of the activities and processes in which students and teachers engage. The "answer" which a student discovers at the end of a single activity of the kind described below is of little importance in the way it stands on its own. This is the source of some frustration for a teacher who sees such activities in the same manner as a mathematics or history or reading activity. A social reasoning activity rarely ends in a readily measureable outcome connected to a behavioral objective.

The rest of the manual, then, is very skill oriented. Part II introduces the dilemma story approach, an initial means to help students explore ethical questions through the curriculum. In the third part of the manual, attention turns to ethical questions in the daily operation of the classroom itself. Both approaches provide the teacher with new opportunities to better understand student learning and ethical behavior and provide students

with new opportunities to understand their own unspoken ethical code and to develop their capabilities to reason about social problems.

II. The Dilemma Story Approach

The simplest approach to teaching for social reasoning development duplicates the process which psychologists suggest we all employ in making social decisions. When confronted with a difficult social or moral choice, we employ a simple decision-making process. First, we suggest an answer to our problem. We follow our first choice with a quick review of the social evidence at hand -- what are the good reasons for taking the chosen action? What are the bad reasons? What are the consequences of the action? Upon some reflection, we make a second decision: The chosen action was a good (or right) one or a bad (or wrong) one.

Classroom adaptation of this natural process rests on the dilemma story. To begin a process of decision-making in a social domain, students must first confront a difficult choice. The dilemma story serves this function. It represents a situation which the student can relate to and sees as realistic. The story presents a character with whom the student can identify. The character enters a situation in which he or she must solve a problem, and the problem rests on the conflict of principles. An example of a good dilemma story follows.

This Neighborhood Needed a Little Excitement

"Hey!" Watch what happens when I do something!" Angela called to Judy. "Go around the corner and wait for me."

Judy walked down to the end of the street and around the corner of the building there. As she looked around the edge of the building, she saw Angela reach into a fire alarm box. Then Angela ran down to the building where Judy waited.

"Quick! Follow me!" Angela called. She ran down the alley behind the building. A siren wailed in the distance.

"Girl, you're crazy!" Judy yelled. "You are going to get us in big trouble!" She ran to catch up. Angela darted up the fire escape on the back of the building.

The siren grew louder as Angela and Judy got to the roof of the building. They ran to the front rail of the roof. When they looked down into the street, a fire engine roared up to the alarm box. The driver got out of the truck. People began to gather. Although Judy could not hear them talking, she knew that the fire fighter must be asking directions to the fire. No one knew. The driver returned to the truck and drove slowly away.

"Neat!" Angela sat down with her back to the rail. "This neighborhood needed a little excitement."

"Angela!" Judy shouted, "don't you know that it's against the law to turn in a false alarm?"

"Judy, you are so dull. That was really super. Nobody knows but you and me, so they won't catch us." Angela was still breathless from running and excitement. "Besides," she said with a laugh, "those fire fighters need the practice."

As Judy walked home she thought about what had happened. She didn't think it was right for Angela to turn in a false alarm. Judy decided to keep quiet about it.

About a month later Judy was walking past the apartment building where Angela lives. Suddenly Judy heard her name called out. She looked up and saw Angela leaning out a window.

"Judy! Quick! Call the fire department. Our kitchen is on fire!"

"Are things a little dull today?" Judy asked with a laugh.

What should Judy do?

The story suggests issues which elementary students consider important. Friendship, authority, trust all represent important elements which students use daily to structure their school and home lives. The teacher can take advantage of a student's natural desire to bring closure to the problem in the story through a structured discussion process.

The teaching process which utilizes the dilemma story comprises four principal parts. The teacher presents the dilemma to the students. The students choose a course of action. They examine the reasoning which they used in deciding. Finally, the students reflect upon the decisions which they made.

Step One: Confronting the Dilemma

The teacher introduces a dilemma story with a short discussion of the issues upon which it focuses. This ensures that the students understand the terms in the story. Before making a decision or examining the reasoning behind student's decisions, the teacher reviews the circumstances of the story. The teacher can focus class attention on the dilemma by asking several students to state the problem which the central character faced.

This preparatory phase is particularly important for primary students and immature students in the middle grades. We often tend to generalize the skills of adults to children, skills which we developed painfully over many years. The conception of a problem means something quite different to children than it does to adults. Such differing conceptions reflect complex interactions of experience and cognitive development. Consequently, we should not expect children to immediately understand the social nature of a problem presented in a dilemma story.

Diagram 2: The Dilemma Story Teaching Process

Step One: Confronting the Dilemma

a. present story
b. review circumstances

Step Two: Identifying the Best Action

a. choose a position
b. alternative dilemmas

Step Three: Reasoning

a. identify reasons
b. examine reasons
c. think about reasoning
d. choose the best action

Step Four: Reflection

a. rethink problem
b. review reasoning
c. bring closure

The teacher can help students over this hurdle with a patient review of the concrete elements of the story. An examination of the problematic elements of each concrete action will help young children conceptualize the story's problem.

Another adult assumption occasionally creates a pitfall in discussion at this point. We tend to feel that children, because of their exposure to television and the rough and tumble justice of the schoolyard, are inured to the distress suggested by a character in trouble in a story. While children quickly create and implement protective devices in such circumstances, the distress continues. The teacher should exercise sensitivity in reviewing the circumstances of the dilemma story, asking the student how he or she feels about the problem as it emerges from the story, and reassuring the child that the story is not real.

With primary children, the presentation of the story, review of the story circumstances, and identification of the central character's problem may consume the students' limited attention span. In this case, the teacher may wish to proceed directly to a conclusion. A student-written conclusion to the story or a student picture of the story serves very well. It brings the exercise to closure in a reflective way.

Step Two: Identifying the Best Action

In the second phase of the teaching process, the teacher asks the students to choose a position on the "should" question of the dilemma story. Should Judy turn in a fire alarm? Although the "should question" appears to ask itself, student choice of a position requires a good deal of sensitivity and judgement on the part of the teacher. First, the teacher must decide whether he or she desires to have a split in the class on the "should question." Very young students or very immature elementary students feel insecure in a classroom where consensus does not prevail -- a rare occurrence but one for

which the sensitive teacher must prepare. Second, if the teacher pursues a split in class positions, and such a split does not occur, how will the teacher guide the discussion?

Young students who require consensus in class position will likely make themselves obvious early in the school year. Such children should not be forced to divide on the issue of the dilemma story. The use of an alternative dilemma will give the teacher more evidence of such immaturity. For example, the teacher may ask "Should Judy turn in a fire alarm?" and the class agrees that this represents the best course of action. An alternative dilemma changes the story slightly, making the social or moral choice more difficult. "Suppose that Judy's mother and father had talked to Judy about how bad it is to turn in a false alarm." Many students will reconsider and some will change their positions on the dilemma, or they will simply reaffirm their original position. A very immature class, however, will quickly change its position to the one that the students sense that the authority figure in the classroom -- the teacher -- considers the correct one. An additional alternative dilemma favoring the first course of action will result in another reversal of class consensus. Obviously, these students require agreement with the teacher to continue. The teacher should not attempt a further split in reasoning.

Students who do not respond to the first alternative dilemma by increasing the class split on the "should question," most often will not change with further alternative dilemmas. The teacher should proceed with the rest of the lesson.

Step Three: Techniques for Reasoning

In the third step of the social reasoning process, the student has four objectives. First, the student identifies reasons for adopting the chosen alternative. Why should the central character do this? Second, the student

critically examines the adequacy of his or her reasons. Why is that a good reason to take the chosen action? Third, the student explores the nature of reasons. What makes this kind of reason an effective one? Finally, the relationship of one's reasons to the chosen action come under scrutiny, bringing the student back to the original question. Is this the best thing to do because of the best reasons? Or might there be a better choice of action for which I do not have the best reasons?

The initial steps of the dilemma story discussion most often lend themselves to full class activity. As students begin to look at reasons they have employed to justify their decisions, the teacher has opportunities to employ other activities. The following activities suggest avenues for teachers to follow in encouraging their students to look closely at their reasoning. Each activity represents a different arrangement of students.

A. Brainstorm Strategy

In full class complement students suggest all the reasons they can devise, silly or serious, good or bad, for all alternative courses of action. Brainstorming assumes that everyone has good ideas, usually we tend to stifle them in ourselves by worrying over whether our ideas are worthwhile. Second, brainstorming assumes that we get new ideas from hearing others' ideas. Consequently, brainstorming techniques attempt to generate -- not to judge. After all the ideas are exhausted, the adequacy of the ideas can come under consideration. Consequently, the teacher should encourage students to suggest reasons and discourage students from rejecting or modifying other students' suggestions. That will happen later.

All the suggestions must be recorded. Upper elementary children can list the alternatives on the chalkboard. Younger students need another device, however. By revising the brainstorming process into a game, the

teacher can rely on the memory of the students, and turn brainstorming toward development of active listening skills. The teacher asks a volunteer to suggest a reason. The student states a reason. The teacher asks for a second volunteer for a second reason. After stating his or her reason, the second volunteer must state the first volunteer's reason, and is responsible for remembering that reason. The process continues until reasons or student numbers are exhausted -- each student remembers only one reason.

After students have suggested reasons, a process of classification begins. Reasons are matched to alternative courses of action. Students determine by a show of hands which are good reasons and which are bad reasons. Each student decides which reason he or she considers the best reason. The class discusses those which are the best reasons.

B. Student Report

Students who have had some experience in the discussion of different social choices can soon work through examination of reasoning on their own. Each student chooses a course of action, lists reasons to justify that action, and prioritizes the reasons. Finally, the student writes a paragraph telling why he or she decided one reason was best. A sample worksheet on the following page demonstrates this strategy for the dilemma story presented earlier.

C. Small Group Discussion

Groups of 3-6 students can discuss the reasoning behind dilemma choices if the tasks expected of them are well-structured. The teacher should choose the groups, assign the group task placing student instructions on the chalkboard, and define how the students will report the outcome of their deliberations.

Student Worksheet

1. Choose what you think Judy should do.

   _____I think that Judy should turn in the fire alarm.

   _____I think that Judy should not turn in the fire alarm.

2. These are the reasons why I think that Judy should do that.

3. Go back to #2 and read your reasons again. Number your reasons according to the best and worst in the margin. Number 1 should be the best reason.

4. My number 1 reason is the best reason because

1. Choosing the group. Select students on the basis of the homogeneity of their positions -- all in favor of a single course of action. Or select students with mixed positions. Assign each group a place to work.

2. Give instructions on the group task.

   a. List three reasons why you think the person in the dilemma should take the action you favor.

   -or-

   Choose three reasons the person in the dilemma should do something and three reasons that person should not do that.

   -or-

   (For an undecided group) List three things you need to know to make this decision.

   b. Rank order your reasons from best to worst.

   c. Decide why one reason is better than another.

3. Reporting procedure:

   Select a reporter who will tell the class what you decided.

   -or-

   Write a report together as a group.

   -or-

   Send a reporter to another group. Listen to the reporter who comes to your group. Tell the reporter what you liked about the report.

D. Role Play

Dilemmas offer creative students an opportunity to be dramatic and creative. Teachers can make use of this opportunity by asking students to take the roles of people in the dilemma story, pursuing the story to its appropriate conclusion.

In a role play situation, the players derive the greatest benefit because they have an opportunity to try to adopt the perspective of other people. The observing students can derive benefit as well if the teacher provides some guidance. Good observers will be able to give feedback from the role play, responding to these questions:

1. What action did the players choose?
2. How did their actions solve the problem?
3. Why were these actions good or bad?

After the players complete their presentation, the observers can deliberate on the questions in class discussion or through the individual or small group activities described above. The class observers should report their decisions and the players should tell why they chose their actions.

Role play need not become a theatrical endeavor. The most effective situations are usually those which arise spontaneously. Role play and the discussion that follows may occupy as little as 5-10 minutes.

Probing Student Reasoning

As students work through the activities described above, the teacher will find that their discussion tends to wander away from the central issues of the dilemma and the reasoning in justifying social decisions. The teacher can help students focus on the issues and the structure of reasoning through questioning techniques. Probe questions focus the discussion on the "why" behind the issues.

Not surprisingly, the most effective and most often used question is simply "why". The more forms of the question "why?" in the teacher's

repertoire, the more deeply can a student look into the reasoning implicit in making a choice. "Why is that a good reason?" "Who can tell me why this is a good reason?" "Why might some disagree with you?" "What makes this the best thing to do?"

A second useful kind of probe question focuses on the moral or social issues in the dilemma story. Issues such as loyalty, friendship, authority, and acceptance, among others, are of great importance to elementary age children. The dilemma story derives its power from the manner in which such issues may reflect conflict of moral principles. The teacher should help students make these issues manifest in the class discussion of the story. In the above story, "This Neighborhood Needs a Little Excitement," principles of friendship and authority are in conflict. The teacher might ask "What obligation has Judy to her friend?" or "Does Judy have to take care of her friend? Why?" "Isn't it against the law to turn in a false alarm? Won't Angela and Judy get in trouble? How does that make a difference?" "Would it make a difference if Angela were Judy's sister? What kind of difference? What should Judy do then?" These questions help students look at the issues which underly the dilemma. They help students think about justification of action based upon the content of the dilemma story and principles which govern right action.

Issue-related probe questions lead the students easily out of the confines of the dilemma story. If a principle is a true one, it should be general in nature, i.e., a principle is always true. Students need help to make this jump in logic. "Judy shouldn't tell what Angela did because that wouldn't be right. You can't tell on your friends." The issue is loyalty to friends. But is that a principle which always holds true? The teacher might ask,"So you should never tell on your friends?" or "Is it ever OK to tell someone your friend did something wrong?" For many elementary children, friendship is all-important, and they will not admit a circumstance in which a greater principle overcomes their desire to protect friendship.

The general consequence probe question helps students articulate these positions and to think about them reasonably.

A final kind of probe question asks the student to adopt the perspective of others. The ability to "put oneself in another's shoes" represents a scheme of development in itself related to but somewhat different from cognitive moral development. Elementary children most often can recognize that others have a perspective independent of their own. The more mature elementary child recognizes that that independent perspective does not mean that one's own perspective is wrong. Immature children tend to believe that there can be only one "right" perspective on an issue, i.e., they cannot separate their perspective, others' perspectives, and appropriate action in a dilemma situation. This helps adults understand why many young children feel insecure when the class position is split.

Nevertheless, the teacher will find it helpful to ask students to look at issues, actions, and dilemmas from the points of view of others. "What would Judy's mother think that Judy should do?" Very immature children will not understand the question. Or they will repeat their own perspective. But most elementary children quickly learn that others have independent perspectives and can articulate them. Teachers will find this a useful technique to ensure that all sides of a problem are presented in the discussion.

Step Four: Reflection

When we make real decisions in everyday life, we tend to follow decision-making with a period of reflection on our decision. Did I do the right thing? Am I satisfied with the outcome of my decision? Am I satisfied with the way I decided? The classroom social reasoning process also includes a time for reflection on decision-making and reasoning.

The objective of step four is to encourage students to rethink the dilemma of the discussion so that reasoning does not end with the close of the discussion. For the teacher, this means that the classroom activity must come to a close without bringing intellectual closure to the problem.

One of the simplest ways to help young primary children bring closure to the discussion consists of asking them to tell the end of the story or draw a picture showing the end of the story. The children find satisfaction in resolution of the problem, and the teacher need not tell the "right" answer. If a child asks for a right answer, the teacher can discuss why the child feels that his or her resolution to the problem is the best one. Of course, if the children press for the teacher's answer to the problem ("But what would you do?") it is only reasonable to give an answer. This is best left to the end of the discussion, however, and should be followed with a reason. The teacher thus participates in the decision-making process rather than truncating it.

Older students have tolerance for more complex activities. Fifth and sixth grade students can reflect through a written process, e.g: Write a paragraph describing the best reason you heard that was on the other side of the problem from your position.

The focus group technique works well for reflection. In groups of three, students each have one minute of uninterrupted time to talk about the discussion. The task might be: Tell what you now feel would be the best thing for Judy to do. Or, tell what the best argument was that you heard in today's discussion and why. Each person in turn in the circle of three speaks for one full minute without interruption from other members of the group. This requires some organization of thought beforehand, and the teacher should plan a one-minute period for this. In addition, the teacher can develop student listening skills by asking one member of each group to recapitulate the thoughts of the last speaker.

The dilemma discussion seeks to implement a process of social reasoning through student discussion of a contrived social problem. Students confront a problem, make a decision, and then look critically at the satisfaction they find in justifying social decisions in certain ways.

As products of Western culture, adults may often overlook the importance of the last element in the discussion process. The satisfaction which we find in rational decision-making process is that which ties us to rationality. Only as long as we find that rational thinking apparently solves our problems, contributes to our view of progress, and helps us feel that we are part of a culture will we likely continue to employ rationality. While rationality is represented as being value free or objective, one learns to be rational because rationality is valued by our culture. In other cultures, magic serves the same functions of decision-making.

The first section of this manual suggested that certain patterns of decision justification can be discerned in all people, and that those patterns follow a predictable route of development. The dilemma discussion process, seeking to "prime the pump" of reasoning, represents only one process to encourage development. Other techniques which utilize opportunities to make real decisions in the school are presented in the following pages of this manual.

III. Creating a classroom community

While the dilemma story has been a useful and effective technique for classroom discussions of fairness and justice, there are several other strategies that stimulate moral development. The Kohlbergian approach to cognitive moral development identifies six classroom conditions that working together enhance psychological growth. The six conditions necessary for moral development to take place in the classroom include:

1. Role-taking Opportunities: Activities in which children are encouraged to see things from another person's point of view and which stimulate their ability to be empathetic and less ego-centric.

2. Conflict Situations that Stimulate Moral Discussions: The dilemma story gives teachers and students practice in the skills needed for discussing real (as opposed to hypothetical) classroom problems of a moral as well as social nature.

3. Problem Solving Opportunities: People learn best when they are actively involved in making decisions that are relevant to them.

4. Dialogue Among Peers in Small Groups: Children who interact in small groups have higher levels of reasoning than those who do not have such experiences.

5. Exposure to Higher Stage Reasoning: The teacher and other students serve as models through class discussions, challenging children at lower stages to restructure their reasoning.

6. Participation in a Classroom Structure Perceived as Just and Fair by the Student: Many classroom teachers have intuitively created classroom environments that are considered fair to the students. These teachers generally are effective in achieving academic goals while avoiding authoritarian teaching styles. They are able to share the responsibility

of the social environment with children while being in control of the curriculum goals. Lawrence Kohlberg and colleagues have idealized a "just community" in which the structure, procedures, and curriculum of a school promotes and guides the students and staff in developing participatory democracy. In such an environment, teachers deliberately plan classroom discussions of fairness and justice based on student interactions. This stimulates development toward more mature judgment and reasoning. Cognitive change in patterns of thinking about moral issues requires interaction of the child and his/her social environment.

As the teacher incorporates the above conditions into the core of school activity, the student's reasoning about issues of fairness and justice will become more sophisticated. The ability to see from another's point of view will become more comprehensive. Students will come to recognize mutual benefits of actions in addition to personal benefits. That is, he/she will progress toward higher stages of reasoning.

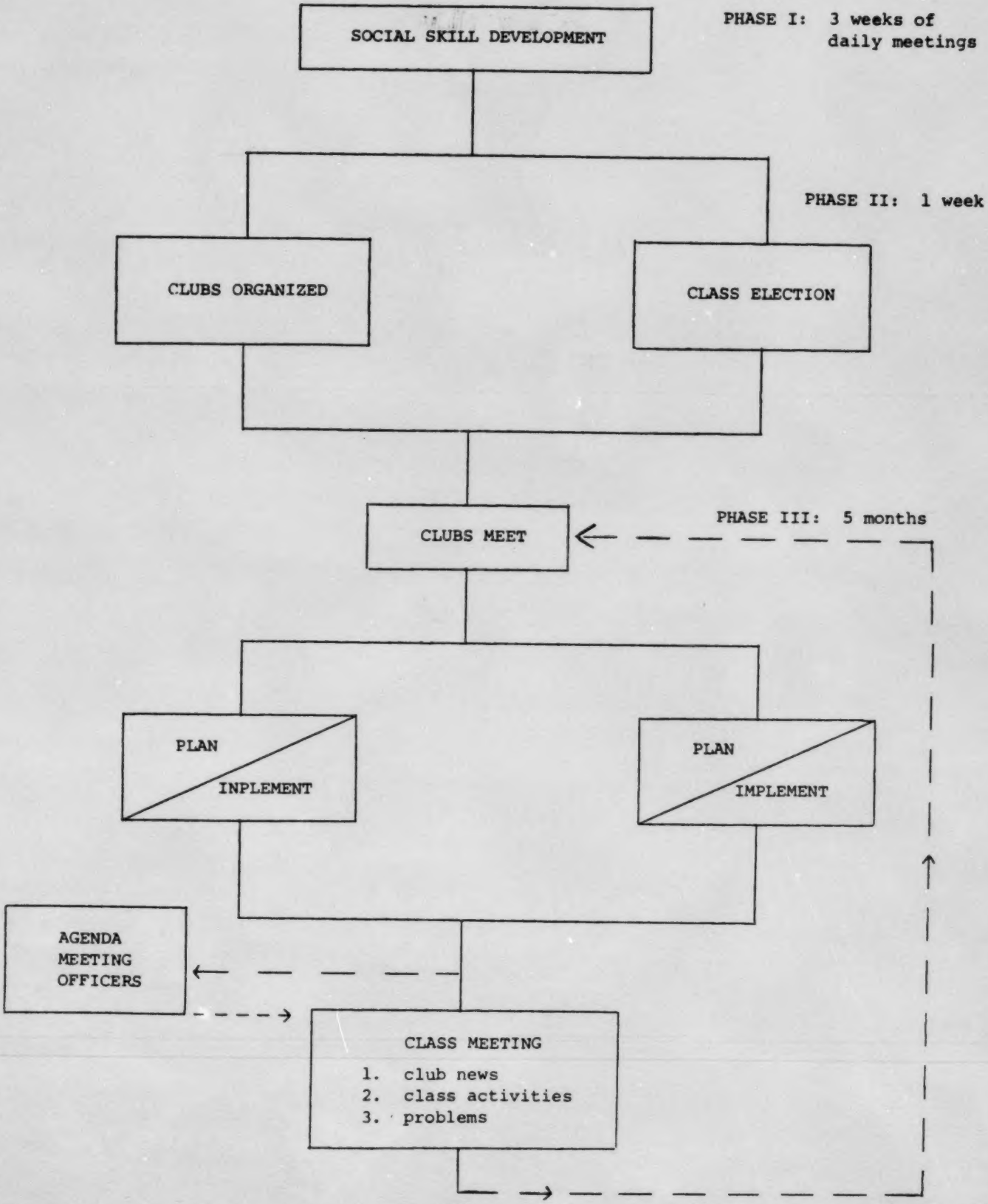
Of course, the hard part comes in operationalizing the six conditions for growth in social reasoning outlined above. Many schools have tried informally to implement the conditions, but a growing number are creating formal programs toward those ends. The remainder of this section describes the framework for implementing a classroom community program in which teacher and students work together to create a classroom environment where growth can occur.

Structure and Organization of a Classroom Community

One example of classroom community includes the following components: clubs, class meetings, and an on-going social skills training program. The environment and all activities integral to the community are based on the psychological research and theoretical underpinnings of the cognitive moral development approach.

Diagram #1

INTERVENTION CHART



The six conditions for moral development outlined above form the basis from which this intervention evolved. Diagram 1 displays the basic framework for creating the classroom community. The plan consists of three phases.

Phase 1: A three week training program of 40-minute daily sessions. Children learn the purpose of problem-solving groups. The dynamics of fair decision-making in groups, the process of parliamentary procedure that facilitates smooth group functioning and other communications skills that enhance listening and role-taking skills. Activities include games, movies, discussion groups, film-strips and role-playing. These serve as preparation for the second and third phase of the social skills intervention.

Phase 2 of the intervention requires about two weeks or about ten, 40-minute sessions. This phase has two main goals: the organization of students into small club groups and the preparation of the class for student-directed class meetings. The teacher guides the club selection process and introduces the framework for the club meetings. Concurrent with the club selection, the teacher directs the election of class officers by modeling the role of chairperson.

Phase 3 of the program continues for the rest of the year. It requires two 30-minute periods a week. During one 30-minute period, small club groups convene to plan activities. The second weekly 30-minute period comprises a class meeting in which club reports are given, classroom news is shared, problems are discussed, and decisions are made about classroom concerns. The social experience of Phase 3 extends and stabilizes the structures for moral development developed in Phase 1 and 2.

Why Establish a Classroom Community?

The purpose is to create a community that promotes justice in a democratic environment. The community nurtures a cohesiveness of its members and develops

social responsibility for the welfare of all. Citizenship is promoted as the members share the responsibility for the community's smooth functioning.

The community contributes to students' psychological development. Educational research suggests that the amount of complexity presented by the social environment facilitates a child's restructuring of reasoning resulting in higher-level, more rational reasoning. It is possible to assess the level of one's social reasoning through interview techniques. Those interested in the measurement of social reasoning stages should explore the works of Damon and Kohlberg in the bibliography.

The community offers students opportunities to develop their social skills in the safe setting of the school. The activities and processes which this guide describes are directed toward the realization of the six conditions set out at the beginning of this section. Role-taking opportunities offer students the opportunity to "try on" the perspectives of others. Real conflict situations stimulate discussions about fairness and justice. Opportunities arise for real problem-solving. Students learn to dialogue among peers in small groups. Students gain exposure to higher stage reasoning. Students participate in a classroom structure perceived by them as fair and just.

Many elementary classroom teachers have intuitively provided children with elements of these opportunities that contribute to the conditions for moral development. They have thus created a cohesive community with a democratic environment. However, teachers who successfully promote student sharing of classroom responsibilities often lacked a strong rationale and a clearly defined process for creating such an environment. They undertook community creation alone. The processes described below hopefully give interested teachers more concrete direction.

The Program for a Classroom Community

The components of the program for a classroom community consist of a combination of ideas from group dynamics techniques, the social studies curriculum and classroom management methods and strategies. These components are systematically integrated to achieve an optimal environment for supporting conditions for social development. The creation of the classroom community proceeds through three phases, described below. Teachers of self-contained classrooms or those who team with other teachers will find this plan a framework for designing their community. Teachers in departmentalized schools will want to coordinate their activities with other teachers of the same grade level.

Phase I: The Preliminary Program

A. Establishing procedures and standards. Classroom procedures, responsibilities, and rules are typical considerations for a teacher at the beginning of the year. Each September students review the rules of the school and the classroom. Functioning as a member of a community, however, requires a higher level of participation in governance. Students can begin simple decision-making about the course of classroom activity and housekeeping at the outset of the school year. They need to offer suggestions and comments in establishing these structures. The teacher can establish objectives: "What jobs would help our room stay comfortable and attractive?" "What procedures will help our day run smoothly?" What kind of behavior do we like to see in ourselves and our classmates?" Students and teachers offer ideas, discuss items, and come to consensus. The final product will meet the approval of the group and establish a sense of pride. Perhaps more importantly, students and teacher will share common responsibility for and ownership of a smoothly operating classroom. Every child understands the jobs, procedures, routines, rules, and standards of

his or her room. Specifics of each will require several weeks of practice and reinforcement, but there are rarely questions why these structures exist because the students and teacher created them together.

1. Rules/Standards

To establish rules by group consensus among adults requires a strong facility in group dynamics in the group leader. Fortunately, elementary children do not possess the sophisticated "bag of tricks" that we adults use to distract each other and undermine group tasks. Short attention span and inability to conceptualize the whole task represent the principal stumbling blocks for children. The creative teacher overcomes these problems daily in the routine of academic work. The same attention to detail, careful planning, and structured activity will guide the teacher in social development of students as it does in academic development.

Rules can be developed by the class through a 5-step process.

a. "Where may we need to have rules?" Students list these as categories on the chalkboard.

b. Create sample rules. In groups of five, students generate ideas for rules in each category. Each group considers one category.

c. Compilation. The ideas of all groups are compiled by categories.

d. Positive restatement. The teacher asks students to restate all rules in positive terms. "This group said we should have a rule that says no running in the hall. What do we want people to do in the halls? (Walk.) How can we say that? (Walk in the halls.)"

Statement of rules in positive terms makes them standards of positive behavior which all students have ascribed to. Common acceptance of positive standards represents the students' first step toward a sense of community. Agreement on positive terms underscores concretely the positive feeling of belonging to a community and reduces emphasis on the punitive nature of breaking rules.

e. Display with pride. Students make posters or a list of their classroom standards. These are prominently displayed, for they will be referred to again.

2. Room Responsibilities

The key to successful room responsibilities for students lies in the teacher's tolerance for student decision-making. The student's view of the "fairest" way to line up, go through the halls, clean chalkboards, pass out papers, or ask permission to go to the restroom, will seem needlessly complex to an adult. But the child who takes seriously the logistic and housekeeping responsibilities of the classroom, finds it essential to establish a system of absolute fairness in concrete terms. As in the case of establishing rules or standards, the teacher can best provide the structure and process for room responsibilities, allowing the students to determine their assignment.

A four-step teaching process is presented to facilitate room assignments.

a. Determine the jobs to be assigned. This will of necessity represent a tentative list. After the first week of room responsibilities, the list should be reviewed.

b. Define each job carefully. Students must know what will be done, how to achieve the task, authority of the person assigned to the job, expectations for the other class members. Job definitions and requirements will come under review periodically, as students determine that responsibilities require more or less time, persons, authority, resources, or cooperation from the class.

c. Create a method for monitoring responsibilities. A chart or roster posted in the room represents the most common approach. For young primary children, responsibilities may need to be represented graphically.

d. Determine the frequency of reassignment of responsibilities. Weekly reassignment ensures that all students have an opportunity to perform all jobs.

For example, one group of students established procedures for lining up to go through the halls, a necessity in many buildings. The children organized themselves into alphabetical order and split into two lines -- Line A and Line B. Each day Lines A and B rotated the privilege of being first to go forward. Each week they reversed alphabetical order. A large monthly calendar was coded to keep track of the system, with A-B or B-A for each day and Front or Reverse for each week. The students found this to be the fairest system because some of the shy children would otherwise be pushed back and the aggressive would always go first.

The preceding example illustrates a way in which a teacher may share classroom responsibilities with students. Children develop procedures for their own needs but with attention to impact on the larger group. Active student involvement in such decision-making and problem solving may appear trivial to adults, but gives children a sense of responsibility for their own school lives and commitment to their school group.

3. Establishing Academic Goals

The academic requirements of the classroom offer additional opportunities to develop a sense of community. Many teachers use diagnostic tests to group students by ability in reading, math, and language arts. Such groups represent sub-sections of the larger classroom community. Through the application of group awareness strategies described below, the teacher can help students explore small group communications and social interaction with others within their classroom community as well as at the level of the whole class.

Individualized academic programs provide the means for student participation in self-governance on a more personal level. Students can set goals for levels of achievement and for timely completion of assignments. This can be done between teacher and student for establishment of goals, followed by academic group discussion, encouraging student reflection upon the appropriateness of his or her goals in the group. These interaction activities add a much-needed element to individualized instruction: that of person-to-person interaction, reducing the isolation which accompanies individualized instruction.

4. Establishing Group Awareness

To function effectively as members of a group, students need to gain some positive experience in group work. By engaging students in simple group activities which require little or no productive results in academic achievement, the teacher can foster positive attitudes toward group work and develop useful skills. Then these attitudes and skills will contribute to the academic and social development objectives which will require smooth group functioning. The teacher thus primes the pump of group functioning before the students must achieve academic and social tasks in groups.

a. A group art project is particularly well suited to group awareness development in primary students. Especially popular is the group herald. Each group of four students receive a piece of muslin and several pieces of paper. Their task is to create a group herald. The herald will symbolically represent each group, so it should show things on it which are important to the group. Typical heralds include pictures of favorite activities, games, and foods. Each group shares its herald with the class and tells how it explains them as a group.

b. Upper elementary children are capable of more complicated tasks. The group mobile has been very popular. Each group of 4 or 5 students chooses a theme for a mobile, such as cooperation, togetherness, responsibility, fairness. Each group member creates a part of the mobile which is hung in the classroom.

c. Brainstorming also promotes positive attitudes toward groups when the group represents the whole classroom. This technique, described above in Section II, represents a first step in problem solving. Consequently, it provides the teacher with a smooth transition activity from development of group awareness to implementation of group work.

d. Teachers in team teaching situations have a special opportunity to develop group awareness. Students see team teachers working together as adult groups cooperating with one another, being tolerant of problems, supporting each other in decisions, and showing genuine interest and concern for children. Team teaching can strongly influence student feeling of a trusting, caring environment. In addition to representing a model of positive attitudes, a team can deliberately plan activities that nurture positive attitudes in students -- attitudes toward each other and attitudes toward school. The teacher should give students many opportunities to see teachers in team situations.

The outcomes of Phase I are flexible, skilled students and teachers. This is a time of discovery of self and self-in-group for students. As such, it means a time requiring tolerance by the teacher. As with any new approach, program, or activity, the teacher will find that its first implementation will be faltering, the second will give confidence, and the third will be smooth. Phase I lays the groundwork for a community of students. Phase II will offer the chance to fine-tune the skills which students developed in Phase I.

Phase II: Social Skills Development Program

The preliminary program accomplished the goals necessary for the second process in creating the classroom community. By the third week, students are usually ready to begin the social skills development program (See Diagram 2). The program can be easily implemented during a social studies period and in homeroom periods. The goals of the social skills development program are for students to:

(1) identify characteristics of groups

(2) apply group characteristics to the classroom group

(3) develop skills needed to interact in a group

(4) appreciate and value the benefits of a smooth functioning group

The above goals involve skills and understandings basic to the student's ability to function in the classroom community framework. These goals were accomplished through the following hierarchy of learning activities.

1. Talk about groups

Sociologists suggest that groups have four common characteristics: common goals, shared meaning (norms of behavior), interactions, and interdependence.

After a kickball game, students defined the characteristics of the teams according to these sociological concepts of groups. Students discuss how these four characteristics apply to kickball teams. Similarly, students can cut pictures of groups from magazines and explain why they believe the picture shows a group. Groups on television and in the school can be analyzed.

2. Observe a group

A field trip can provide a challenging opportunity to observe how the people act in a group. In Western Pennsylvania, the Old Economy settlement of Harmonists provides an opportunity for students to analyze a historical case study. Within every community, however, are many opportunities to observe group endeavors. Office workers act as a group. An auto dealer and repair garage rests on the interdependence of the various departments. As the teacher reviews the guide to observation below, local examples will come to mind.

The teacher diagnoses the student's comprehension of group concepts through discussions. Based on the idagnoses, students are assigned one of four activities, which facilitate observation and student investigation of an observed group. Each activity ranges in complexity according to the concept observed and the task to be accomplished at school.

Concept A - Interdependence

(1) Look for the jobs or types of work that are needed to keep the groups running.

(2) Assignment: Draw a picture of one of the jobs the people had, or list as many of the different occupations needed to run the group as you can.

(3) What are the jobs we have in our classroom? List the jobs. How do we depend on each other to do these jobs?

Concept B - Interactions

(1) Look for the things the people of the observed group do together.

(2) List the things the people do together in the group. Put a "T" for Today in front of things we still do today in our communities.

(3) What do we do together in our classroom? Write a short paragraph. Draw a picture.

Concept C - Shared Purposes, Goals

(1) Look for the goals or purposes the people had for setting up their group.

(2) Write a paragraph telling about the history of the group as you know it. Tell the reasons it was established and the goals of the group. Tell the story of (the observed group).

(3) What are the goals of our classroom? What's the purpose of having reading, math, science, etc. What do you think you are in school? Tell the story of our classroom.

Concept D - Shared Meanings - Norms of Behavior

(1) Look for the norms of behavior of the group observed. A norm of behavior is a way that people in a group expect themselves and others to act.

(2) What special words did the group use? What do they mean? After you know what these mean, write a paragraph explaining the norms of behavior of the people of the group we visited.

(3) How do we expect the members of our classroom to act? Make a list of the ideas we share and special ways we understand each other. Role play our rules.

3. Role play a group problem

The role play techniques described in Section II provide an easy transition from discussion of groups to simulated or real group activity. Ask students to brainstorm problems that members of the observed group might have in their daily activity. Role play the resolution of these problems. Observing students, tell why the proposed solution is a good one and suggest similar problem areas in the classroom community.

4. Act in a group

After the field trip, teachers implement a small group activity. First, students with similar tasks are grouped to combine observations into a complete statement. Then, students are regrouped so that one "expert" from each observation group meet to present the task groups' observation. For this activity, students are mixed according to the various levels of observational tasks. Each group discusses the four group characteristics of the observed group. Listening skills are practiced by having the three listeners restate the points made by the speakers. A follow-up activity might be to make a chart defining how students of our classroom act as a group using the four group concepts of the observation.

5. Group games

To provide additional experience in task-oriented small groups, the teachers can use gaming for group action. Teams of five students put five puzzles together without taking puzzle pieces from each other and without talking. After the game, students try to guess the name of the game--cooperation. They discuss how they felt during the game and the problems they had in achieving their goal.

6. Simulate a formal group meeting

The town meeting game represents another opportunity for small group interaction. The teacher facilitates this game by selectively organizing students into teams of five, describing the rules of the game and running each round. The goals of the game are:

(1) to help children practice the verbal responses and methods of parliamentary procedure;

(2) to give students exposure to leadership roles in a structured non-threatening situation, and;

(3) to establish a method for students to work with others to solve problems.

A. How to play the game.

Divide the class into small groups of five. Each group represents a city council and each member functions in the role of chairperson, secretary, member 1, and 2, and representative. Each town is trying to gain animals for their zoo being offered by a T.V. Quiz Show. The emcee of the show is the teacher who calls a representative from each town to the "studio". The representative receives a question which they must take to the council meeting. The questions would vary with the grade level. For 8 to 10 years old, questions might be "what are the names of the continents and oceans," or "name the four food groups and give three examples of each". The council must go through the procedures of:

(1) opening a meeting
(2) calling for a reading of the minutes, and
(3) requesting that the representative present the "new business" i.e., the quiz question.

The town council continues to follow parliamentary procedures of recognizing speakers, voting, etc., as they try to come up with the correct answer. When the final votes are cast, the meeting is adjourned and the representatives return to the quiz show with the answer. A correct answer receives two animals, a partially correct answer receives one animal and the town working most efficiently and coming up with a correct answer first receives a bonus animal.

B. Play the game.

In the second round of the game, each town rotates roles and sends a new representative to the emcee, has a new chairperson, secretary, and two council members. With each new round, the teacher reviews knowledge of parliamentary procedure and the standard responses used, i.e., "Will the meeting please come to order", "Will the secretary read the minutes of the previous meeting?" "Is there any old business", etc. The reinforcement between rounds will clear up any errors the students are making. After five or six rounds, the meetings become smoother and students are ready to use the new skills in real problem solving situations related to class social environment.

C. Teacher preparation for the game.

The teacher preparation for the simulation involves:

(1) collecting paper animals to distribute to the towns
(2) making name tags for "Chairperson, representative, secretary, members" for each member of the group.
(3) listing the responses needed and "lines" used to move the meeting on a chart for easy reference, and
(4) writing multiple copies of quiz questions for town representatives to take to the town.

Every age level can use this game or some adaptation of it to practice fundamentals of group meetings and to provide all individuals a leadership role.

Phase II seeks to implement the skills of Phase I on a preliminary level. Students have observed groups, reflected on group behavior, and suggested similar characteristics and problems in their own group -- the classroom community. In Phase III, the students will implement the community and undertake self-governance in their own classroom.

Phase III: The Classroom Community Framework

Two components make up the framework of the classroom community. Class meetings give students a forum in which they can publicly and safely discuss the governance of their community and clubs provide opportunities to implement social skills.

Class Meetings

The class meeting gives students a weekly opportunity to examine the effectiveness with which they govern their classroom. To provide an effective learning experience for students, the teacher must structure the class meeting at the beginning and then tolerate the difficulties students will confront in trying to make the system work.

The first step consists of student and teacher determination of procedures for conducting the meeting. Simplified parliamentary procedures can be established in class discussion. Students can elect a class leader and other officers which they think are necessary. The teacher may wish to suggest a term of office of a month or two to ensure that several students have this leadership experience. A pre-established agenda contributes to smooth functioning meetings. Provisions for addressing the class meeting, open discussion and voting on issues should be determined as well. A permanent record of these procedures need not take the form of a constitution, but a chart with the pertinent procedures for meeting conduct should be posted during meetings.

Some days before each meeting, the class officers invite students to submit items for the meeting agenda. Teachers who implement the program find that the kinds of items submitted as important topics are very revealing of student priorities. Items will be as different as a problem with stealing pencils and the need to purchase a class ball. Before each meeting, the student officers meet with the teacher to plan the agenda.

At the meeting the classroom leader presents the items on the agenda. Students may address the class meeting singly to present an item or clarify it. Each item is open to discussion by the whole class. In addition, students have opportunities to voice general concerns over procedures in the classroom or the conduct of club activities, described below. Modifications in classroom procedures, structures, and formats evolve from these discussions, as students try to reshape their environment to reflect their view of fairness. For example, one class of students found that their individualized science materials were being misplaced and suggested a new method for clean-up to solve the problem. Students treat such items seriously because they make a difference in the smooth functioning of the classroom. The teacher guides the discussion of these topics to keep students on task and to encourage responsible behavior. The teacher's role in this process will be dealt with in greater depth in the next section.

Trust and respect develop as students deal with more serious problems involving interpersonal relationships. In one community, an interesting conflict arose between nine-year old Bob and Julie. Julie collected classmates' names on a petition stating reasons that Bob was a bully and a smart aleck. Students brought this problem to a class meeting. Various stages of reasoning became obvious to the teacher as the children discussed the fairness of the petition, the function of petitions, the problem described by the petition and the appropriateness of petitions in the community. Some students were able to adopt the perspectives of others -- to put themselves in Bob and Julie's places in the discussion. Resolution of the problem never became explicit, however, and following the meeting the teacher counseled both Julie and Bob regarding their differences. Teachers should not expect complete resolution of problems through the discussion process. The discussion gives students opportunities to articulate their views on problems, confronting problems in ways which they rarely do to themselves. And the discussion gives the teacher time to hear the problems,

think them through with the students, and reflect upon them before dealing with them on a one-to-one basis with the individual children. Consequently, the teacher is in a much improved position to discuss a problem with a child in an individual counseling session. The teacher has heard the problem from several students' points of view, thought about it, and had time to prepare a strategy for discussion with the individual students. The next day the two children were involved in a nonthreatening small group project which helped restore communications between them. Within a few weeks there was forgiveness and acceptance by both children and the class. In many problem situations students can accept the responsibility for counseling classmates. In this way, the classroom community's meetings become a device to aid the teacher in creative management of classroom problems while students have opportunities to take a hand in controlling their own world.

The class meeting component offers students a governance structure whereby students can express their views. Its function is to promote controlled and open exchange of opinions about fairness which is essential to moral development of individuals and to open operation of the community.

Clubs

Clubs are fun, but they also are for learning. In a club, a student works with others to engage in activities of mutual enjoyment, i.e., they have fun together. For the teacher, clubs offer a special opportunity for social development of students and by students with less guidance from the teacher than classroom settings require.

Most teachers are familiar with elementary school clubs. The following outline of club creation and management focuses on opportunities for teachers to contribute to student social development.

a. Students brainstorm a list of clubs.

This can be done in a class meeting. After the brainstorming, the teacher should focus the organization of ideas on resources required so that children will not be disappointed when unrealistic ideas cannot be implemented. Clubs of the greatest variety should be chosen, to encourage a variety of experiences for students and to ensure that all students can find an interesting club in which to participate. The teacher should try to name the clubs in a non-sexist fashion to encourage children to explore all club topics. A homemaking club may discourage boys but "cooking for kids" invites everyone.

b. Students choose the clubs in which they participate.

There will undoubtedly be very popular clubs which will attract many children. The teacher may wish to devote a class meeting to a discussion of the fairest way to choose who will join which club.

c. Limit club size to about 4-8 students.

This ensures that many children will have an opportunity to lead a club and be heard in club decision making.

d. The teacher should encourage club projects which can be shared with the whole class.

This is one more opportunity for students to work in their classroom as part of a community.

One group of fourth-grade students chose to start an anthropology club. They made arrangements for a local university archeologist to talk about the excavation at a nearby site. This required phone calls, scheduling of the cafeteria so that all fourth graders could attend, introduction of the speaker, and appropriate thank-yous. As club member Susan hung up the phone after making

arrangements, her pride was obvious. "I did it," she beamed. "I'm only nine years old and I did it."

Of course, there will be problems which the teacher will notice too late. A science club planned a science fair and enthusiastically invited another class without informing the teachers. Unfortunately enthusiasm did not complete the project on time -- the guest class was disappointed and the teachers rightfully a little annoyed. The incident inspired a very relevant problem-solving activity in the next class meeting, however. How could the students monitor club affairs, avoiding faulty planning or conflicts in scheduling? The students developed an application form requiring specific information -- dates, plans, and purpose -- to be delivered two weeks in advance to the teachers of their grade level. The teachers acted as a clearinghouse for the requests.

IV. The roles of the teacher in the classroom community

Some characteristics of the teacher in the classroom community have been suggested through illustration and examples in the previous section. In this section, the teacher's role in the classroom communities will be defined more precisely in terms of the goals of the teacher who has a developmental perspective and the skills needed to achieve such goals. The second part of this section will apply the roles to a real classroom activity.

Before describing the role of the teacher in creating a moral environment, certain prerequisites will be discussed.

It is probably obvious that the first prerequisite for teaching in a complex environment must be educational competence and pride in the skill needed to create the learning environment. A second set of prerequisite deals with the particular personality of the teacher. Teacher personality is a factor that has been studied to identify "effective teachers." Jackson (1971) suggests effective teachers to have spontaneity, intuitiveness and individuality. Rosenshine and Furst (1971) add variability and enthusiasm.

While teacher personality has not been studied related to moral education, the research on effective teaching personality seems appropriate to apply to the classroom community teacher. Based on the philosophy of the classroom community, a non-authoritarian personality is also congruous with the approach. Being non-authoritarian does not mean relinquishing control of the learning environment or assuming a laissez-faire attitude. If anything, the classroom community teacher must spend more energy and have more competence to influence the classroom environment. In an authoritarian classroom, the teacher plans the content of course work and uses power to maintain the social environment. In a community classroom, the teacher designs the social interaction into the course content. In so doing, the teacher lays the foundation for a functional and productive environment where

students and teacher share responsibility. The teacher is the key in the classroom community. Programmed materials, books, audio-visual aides cannot achieve the goals of social development. The teacher with a developmental perspective realizes that social interaction represents a basic element of development suggested in the cognitive developmental framework. Consequently, the teacher in the classroom community needs to add to his or her competence in the knowledge and skills of content areas, abilities to stimulate the kinds of interactions which lead to development.

What roles does the teacher assume to create an environment of student interaction leading to higher levels of social reasoning? The three teacher roles, designer, implementer, and promoter, correspond to the three phases of community development described in the last section. In each role the teacher asks the question, "Am I giving my students opportunities to be responsible?" In the previous section, illustrations of useful methods outlined activities in an emerging classroom community which helped students practice responsibility. As you read the "job descriptions" of the teacher's three roles described below, try to relate the teaching goals and skills to the activities and teaching approaches described in the last section. Remember that the teacher in each role -- designer, implementer, and promoter -- works toward goals that consider the development of the whole child -- social, emotional, and cognitive -- through their social interaction. The ultimate aim is to structure social interactions that successfully foster socio-moral development.

Designer Role:

The goals of the Designer are:

(1) to develop strategies for building self-esteem;

(2) to organize concepts about groups that make sense to children; and,

(3) to plan for effective group interactions.

The primary teacher builds in time via "sharing" in the schedule for developing self-esteem. Older children can share hobbies or present a family tradition during the holidays.

One classroom studying Japan set a corner of the room as the Tokonoma. Each day a different child brought in an object that had special meaning to them for the class to admire. One child brought in a bracelet she received when she was adopted -- a special moment occurred for other adopted children in the class.

The teacher-designer must sort through many different concepts about groups to find ones relevant to students. The trip to Old Economy described in the case study was carefully planned to build a knowledge base and vocabulary for discussing groups.

Children should become actively involved in observing other groups such as school cooks, the softball team, the scout troop. The participatory democracy described in the last section can be successful in part because students realize that conflicts arise when groups have different goals and that these conflicts can be handled in a procedural way.

Planning for effective group interactions can be very challenging for a teacher. It requires management skills and courage. Sometimes the best thought-out plans can be "bugged" by a fire drill or unexpected visitor just when students are beginning to get organized.

A social studies project in small groups exemplifies an activity which contributes to growth in social reasoning. As students in a group work through processes which lead to a common goal, they will naturally come into conflict. The teacher-designer carefully designs each group's tasks so that student can achieve required tasks. Conflict will occur at a level of intensity which is manageable for the students. With experience, the teacher will learn to distinguish among three levels of group activity in terms of the creative role of conflict.

(1) Low conflict level. So little conflict exists or the conflict is so unreal to the student that he or she faces no challenge. Little growth occurs.

(2) High conflict level. The level of interactional conflict is so high in student activity that the student is overwhelmed by it. Little growth occurs.

(3) Moderated conflict level. A level of conflict or challenge which requires that the student marshal all his or her internal resources achieve a task contributes to growth. Careful planning on the part of the teacher-designer can organize student activity so that students must use the capabilities of others in the group as well as his or her own.

A study of the Middle Ages, for example, found each child might select a medieval character to research. Oral reports on King Arthur, friars, knights, Chaucer, jester, herald, etc. demonstrate the outcome of a group activity in the class. The teacher made the following plans for the group activity:

(1) The names of all the characters were placed in a hat and drawn four at a time.

(2) Each set of four characters comprised a group.

(3) The students' tasks were to plan a skit based on a chance meeting of the four characters.

The dialogue students wrote between Michaelangelo and Leonardo DaVinci in a drawing contest for King Arthur represented one very imaginative example. Student groups knew the task and worked together to solve a problem. They created a pattern of interaction for four characters.

Often small groups or team projects lasting several weeks demand teacher monitoring to keep students on task. Before working in teams, the teacher should direct students in creating a list of positive behaviors for working in

groups, e.g., give everyone a chance to speak, stick to the job, put materials away. These expectations can be distributed to students on a checklist at the beginning of each session and filled out after work.

Self analysis and group evaluation helps students refine skills in working as a group. Children enjoy stepping out of the group to be a "process observer." Using the group behavior checklist, the student notes contributive and disruptive characteristics of the small group and reports the observation at the end of the interaction.

Teacher skills associated with the designer role include the following:

(1) To diagnose the needs of the individual and the group through observations and tests. Areas of diagnosis include skill development in communications, listening, interpersonal relations, self-concept, level of reasoning (concrete-abstract) ability to role-take.

(2) To interpret data from several sources -- the child, the program goals, the theoretical guidelines for moral development.

(3) To adapt and personalize group dynamics techniques and methods that give students opportunities to function in small groups and large.

(4) To create jobs, problems, and formats that stimulate children's thinking and involve them actively in relevant decision-making and problem-solving.

(5) To systematize and sequence ideas, concepts, and activities relating characteristics of groups, qualities of leaders, methods of decision-making.

(6) To integrate the designer skills into a plan of action that provides children with opportunities to learn responsibility in the classroom by assuming responsibility.

Implementer Role

In the role of implementer, a teacher's goals include:

(1) to support personalities and opinions;

(2) to facilitate student involvement; and,

(3) to train students to function as a group.

The implementer takes the designer's plans into the classroom and sets them into action. The implementer must be responsive to spontaneous situations and meet the goals with imagination and a bag of tricks from past experience. A few examples may elucidate the meaning of the goals for the implementer.

To support personalities and opinions, the teacher-implementer needs counseling skills. Counseling often requires one only to listen and encourage students to identify the problem on their own. Listening to students gives the teacher an idea of the developmental stage of the child and the kind of reasoning the child uses to justify his or her acts. The more comprehensive reasoner will mention other peoples' points of view and issues of fairness based on the needs of others as well as self. It is not necessary to identify a child's stage, a process that requires a special focused interview technique and scoring procedures. The teacher may pick up cues to level of reasoning which will guide responses to the child. "I don't think it's fair that Bobby wants me to share the ball. You said I could play with the ball and you're the boss." Describing what's fair and just in terms of the authority person indicates a lower stage of reasoning. "I don't think it's fair that Bobby wants me to share the ball. He wouldn't share it with me this morning." A familiar response to most elementary teachers of grades 3-5, this response reflects a typical reason based on reciprocity. "I don't think it's that Bobby wants me to share the ball. He made the whole team mad this morning, so I shouldn't let him have the ball." While still a questionable reason to refuse to share from an adult perspective, this response represents still higher and more complex reasoning. This reasoner has indicated that the way one relates to his or her peer group and their approval have an impact on what we do.

The teacher can support personality in structured class activity such as clubs described in the last section. Clubs are in some cases noisy, unproductive and full of conflict, but there is a positive side to this conflict. Teacher intervention must occur often to keep club activity moving toward its goals. Intervention can take a variety of styles. It may mean the teacher moves in with a terrific idea that the club finds hard not to get involved with, or may be a clearly defined ultimatum: "You have five minutes to come up with three ideas for a club project." Often the teacher intervenes with a spontaneous lesson on how to be good listeners, i.e., "Each person has 60 seconds to have undivided attention of the group and talk about what's on his or her mind."

Skills of the implementor includes:

(1) To counsel the student to help him/her gain the confidence to participate and to feel pride in personal abilities and unique differences.

(2) To listen carefully and observe facial expressions and non-verbal cues of children and to help students learn these skills.

(3) To instruct students in the appropriate learning tasks that build concepts and understandings of group relationships.

(4) To manage materials, physical arrangements, timing and student movement between activities.

(5) To utilize group dynamics techniques effectively and appropriately to actively involve students.

(6) To set goals for small groups of students and help them identify leadership roles and procedures for achieving tasks.

(7) To re-evaluate plans according to the progress of the group and spontaneously accommodate group and individual needs through alternate strategies.

(8) To reinforce successful behavior and redirect students when necessary according to alternate plans developed in the design or according to spontaneous ideas.

Promoter Role

The teacher-promoter encourages or promotes students to accept the responsibility for managing their social environment. In the promoter role, the teaching goals are:

(1) to reflect attitudes and perceptions of individuals and the group to reveal varying points of view;

(2) to encourage discussion of fairness and justice; and,

(3) to guide decision-making, problem-solving processes.

Several excerpts from class meetings of some 8-, 9-, and 10-year-old children illustrate how the teacher functions to encourage interaction.

In the first example, the teacher hasn't said anything. There is more value in students' challenging one another's thinking than for the teacher to begin stating his or her opinion.

Example 1:

Dale: Any corrections to the minutes? OK, the minutes stand approved. Any old business? OK, the new business is for class dues. Mimi.

Mimi: We voted it out.

Dale: Yeah, but the officers decided we want class dues, because Mr. Johnson's room has $13 in their class treasury.

Betty: They spent it on fish. The dues are like 10 cents a week or something. Everybody brings it in, and besides if we don't have class dues, what's the use of having the treasurer?

Dale: That's right. Mimi.

Mimi: I'm still against it. Last year when we had dues nobody ever brought in money. Every morning I'd run around and get money for class dues and sometimes my mother wouldn't give it to me. So sometimes I'd never bring in any money and it makes you feel bad because you couldn't bring something in. And then you owe 20 cents because last week you couldn't pay your dues.

Daryll: I'd rather have no dues.

Dale: Mimi.

Mimi: What we did last year was we didn't have dues. When we wanted to do something, we just brought money in from home.

Daryll: Right!

Dale: Yeah, but if we don't have class dues we can't have special parties and things.

Mimi: My mother doesn't let me bring in money. Heidi's mother doesn't let her bring in money for dues. And then you get the idea that we don't get to celebrate the party if we don't pay dues.

Dale: That's right.

Mimi: But that isn't fair because my mother won't let me bring in the dues.

Dale: Then you should bring in some kind of note or something that you can't bring in money.

Mimi: Yeah, but then you were saying that we can't participate in the party. But that isn't fair to the person who can't bring it in. They can't. They absolutely can't.

Dale: Daryll.

Daryll: The person who can't do it, if they do participate in the party people will probably always tease them.

Example 2:

Dale: You want to do it that way?

Students: Yeah, No.

Dale: OK, if you don't want to do it that way bring in your class dues. OK, if you don't want to bring in your dues then you can't be in the party.

Mimi: You can't say that.

Dale: Well it's true, Mimi!

Mimi: The reason we have room mothers is to bring in stuff for the parties. We should ask them to bring it in and another thing is people in the class can bring stuff in.

Dale: You mean the mothers are going to bring in the money?

Mimi: No. The room mothers bring in the food and if you want money for field trips you bring the money in from home.

Dale: Yeah, but I thought your mother won't let you bring it in.

Mimi: For field trips she will, but not for dues.

Teacher: There seem to be several choices here. Let's list them on the board to be sure we are clear on them.

The teacher uses group process skills to help the class focus on the decisions.

Example 3:

Vaughn: Allright, any old business? First thing on our list is: Materials for the science room are not being put back in the proper place. Things are getting thrown around. We have decided on what we should do. What can we do about this? Sammy.

Sammy: I think something should be done. I know that in the science room materials are being misplaced. I think something should be done so that things are in the proper place. Labels are useful. I went to find something and all the labels are off.

Vaughn: Dale.

Dale: People would find materials that did not have all the contents and were put back incorrectly. We could see a better label system.

Sammy: It's useless to solve it now because we are not going to be in school much longer. I say we should be careful where we put stuff. If we solve something, it will only be for two weeks and that's only ten days.

Jerry: Maybe we could talk to the other rooms about clean-up.

Sarah: Well, we have a person every day to put the cart away. We have a person every week that has clean-up. He or she is supposed to put everything away, but they usually don't because they will rush for play period. I think a mass clean-up in both rooms would help.

Theresa: But there is only a couple more weeks of school left.

Liza: I want to know how many more days are left.

Sammy: About ten days. That's not too many.

Daryll: I don't think a mass clean-up will help.

Teacher: It's not so much that we have ten more periods or days of school. We will be using the same program next year. Some of you will be going to Middle School, but some of you will be here. How do the people feel who will still be using the materials next year?

The teacher gives the younger children an invitation to voice their opinions on the topic so that what is fair can be challenged by the students. The teacher has set up a conflict situation and set aside expectations of an expedient plan for taking care of materials.

Example 4:

Student: We should discuss the kind of animal we should buy for the classroom.

President: Joyce.

Joyce: I suggest we discuss the petition.

President: Yes, that's right. There's been some unnecessary things going around and there has been a petition about a certain person in this classroom and people have signed their names on it without letting the teacher know about it or understand what they're doing. So what do you think is a good way to not have these petitions going around. Mark?

Mark: I suggest we just tell people not to do it. They probably won't. There's no real way of keeping them from doing it.

President: Jan.

Jan: You could tell the teacher what someone is doing and then she could do something about it instead of like doing that.

Tim: What's the petition about?

Teacher: Well, let me just clarify for those who may not know. It's a petition regarding an individual. Some people claim that this individual is doing things that they feel aren't appropriate for the classroom.

President: Joyce.

Joyce: Did they want that certain person out of the class?

President: No, what it was, they just didn't want this person doing things, and they wanted to discuss it with somebody, so they couldn't think of a more better way to do it, so they just wrote up a petition.

Student: I think that I don't have a better idea, but I think the petition was good because people have told Ms. Walsh, and she talked to the person, but they're still doing this. If the petition was sent out maybe that will stop him.

President: Well then, what should Ms. Walsh do about it?

Student: She can't.

President: What do you mean?

Student: Well, she talked to the person, but they're still doing it.

President: Do you think maybe a class petition will help solve the problem?

The issue under question in the last example involved a classroom rule which students had made. If a school- or district-wide rule were at stake, there would be no question that Ms. Walsh would have taken action. In the case of the classroom rules, however, Ms. Walsh has allowed the students to reflect upon a problem with the teacher's guidance but without a teacher determination of the problem's outcome. This represents a small part of student problem-solving in the safe environment of the classroom.

The question presented by the class president could branch into a variety of activities. The teacher could, in another period of the day, break the class into small groups in order to allow more children to participate in the discussion of the value of a petition.

The promoter skills which the above teacher needed include the following:

(1) To contribute ideas to the group discussion in an unauthoritarian way.

(2) To ask questions that help the group refocus on the topic, show another point of view.

(3) To clarify responses and ideas when necessary.

(4) To reinforce participants in the group -- leaders as well as members.

(5) To suspend judgement of individual's and group actions and attitudes in order to give students the opportunity to reach resolutions.

(6) To tolerate the ambiguities of unresolved conflicts that occur in discussions of fairness and justice.

(7) To explain school policy to students diplomatically before inappropriate decisions occur.

(8) To encourage students to restate the options available before a vote is taken.

(9) To recommend a variety of group processes that may expedite group decision-making, i.e., straw votes, writing comments on the blackboard, explaining procedural language, timing events, setting priorities, brainstorming.

(10) To accommodate students' needs in implementing a decision, i.e., providing adult supervision in projects, trips, collecting money, etc.

(11) To encourage humane, fair, and considerate use of higher reasoning and adept persuasion skills.

(12) To provide information as an experienced resource person.

V. A Principal's Guide for Creating a School Community

The previous chapters of this work have led the teacher through a process for creating a community in the classroom. As with other communities, the classroom community functions through shared meanings, interdependence, interaction, and common goals. And, just as real world communities must work with others outside their own, the classroom community must function in the larger context of the whole school.

The leader of the school is the principal. Consequently, this section of the manual is directed toward the principal as the educational leader of the school and the creation of a community structure at the school building level. A school community offers special benefits to students, teachers, and principal.

A school community expands student awareness of the nature of community beyond the context of the classroom. Students learn in concrete terms that they are interdependent with others beyond those in their classroom with whom they interact on a daily basis. Through participation in a school-wide governance structure, students learn that they can interact as communities with other communities. Student input to school governance gives students a greater feeling of responsibility for their own actions and a greater stake in making the school system function.

The benefits which principals derive at the school level parallel those of the teacher at the classroom level. Through interaction with students in solving real problems, the principal gains insight into the real operation of his or her school building. As students and principal grapple with issues of school governance in an open and accepting atmosphere, the principal has a thumb on the pulse of the school. Often such interchanges occur only when a school crisis arises. Through implementation of a regularly meeting forum, the principal can identify areas of concern before they reach crisis proportions.

The teacher benefits from a school community. Students learn in a concrete way that a fair system of authority exists beyond the level of the teacher, that the teacher is within a system of authority just as the student, and that the authority need not be punitive in nature. The teacher can use this larger system of authority to confront and solve problems which cannot be solved at the classroom level but solve them in an open, inquiring atmosphere which does not threaten to escalate the level of authoritarian response.

Step One: Creating the School Community

The implementation of classroom communities in a school offers the principal the opportunity to give new meaning to student representative governance at a school level. A student forum, senate, or advisory committee which represents a federation of working communities represents the whole school. Without the communities at classroom level, most student governments represent only the participating individuals.

The principal will want to reflect upon the most appropriate method for constituting a school community forum. Election of one or two representatives from each classroom comprises the most common approach. However, some principals have recommended appointment of primary age representatives to ensure that more mature children represent their peers. Election works very well for upper elementary students, however.

Departmentalized grades will require special attention. Election can most easily be implemented in the classroom community. If classroom communities are based on social studies classes, student representatives may be elected there. Homerooms provide a good place for such concerns if no classroom community is in place. The principal may wish to use the election of students to a forum as a device to encourage the development of a classroom community in the homeroom.

At the first meeting of the newly elected/appointed representatives to the school community, the principal's first objective should consist of student orientation to the principal's perspective of the school. A tour of the school represents an excellent activity to achieve this. In every school, many people work together so that students can learn. The principal should guide the student representatives to the following school workers for a short explanation from each about what they do for the school.

a. Secretaries help the principal, assist principal and teachers prepare the correspondence which circulates inside and outside the school.

b. The school nurse cares for the health of all the people in the school.

c. Maintenance and custodial personnel contribute to the health of all through cleanliness and the general well-being by keeping the physical plant an efficient and pleasant place to learn.

d. Guidance counselors help all kinds of students -- those with special problems and those who just need someone to talk to.

e. Special teachers, called itinerants, visit the school regularly to work with children in special areas, such as speech therapy, music, or learning English as a foreign language.

f. The classroom teacher is the one who students know best. This person is responsible for everything students learn in school.

g. And, most important is the student. The student is the reason why all the other people are working in the school. All these people have special jobs to help students in their own way, but they all share the responsibility to help students grow.

h. Finally, there is one more special person who works in the school. That is the student representative to the school community forum. Just as teachers, principal, and all the others who work in the school, the representatives of the classroom communities share in the responsibility to help all the students in the school.

The principal should review how each of the people they saw in the tour shares in the school community. Each person contributes to the school goals. Each has a part in the common meanings and rules of the school. All depend on each other to help the school meet its goals. And, all interact with each other. These are the things that make them a community.

At the end of the tour, the principal should set the date for the next meeting and help the student representatives prepare something to take back to their classrooms. A report of the tour will help students in the classroom communities understand the school from the principal's perspective.

Step Two: Conducting School Community Meetings

On a weekly basis, the principal will meet with the representatives of the classroom communities. This forum gives the principal a medium to serve several goals.

First, the meetings give the principal a device to gain insight into the student body. Discussion of daily events, the concerns of the students, and student views of justice help the principal better understand the overall school milieu.

Second, the principal is directly contributing to the development of students. In the same way that teachers are facilitating social growth through the classroom communities, the principal offers a set of opportunities for children to exercise

and develop their social reasoning structures. For this reason, many principals encourage elections to the school community several times per year, so that more students can participate in the school community.

Third, the school community provides a vehicle for the transmission of school information, procedures, and rules to the whole student body. While the principal ensures that teachers are informed as well, a direct line of communication to students comprises a positive force for discipline in the school. Research in classroom management and school discipline suggests that students are more likely to break rules or engage in antisocial acts when they view the school as an institution. The school community meetings allow the principal to personalize the institution, identifying a human being with school.

Finally, the school community gives students a stake in the smooth functioning of the school. In this manner, it contributes to the principal's prime managerial objective and to a positive approach to discipline. By accepting ownership in the governance of the school, students feel a responsibility to ensure that the school is just and orderly in operation.

The conduct of the weekly school community meeting, thus, warrants some attention to detail. As with other staff meetings, the well-prepared principal can lead an efficient meeting while maintaining an atmosphere of friendly informality.

Six points will help the principal structure continuing success into school community meetings.

a. Create a written agenda for each meeting. While the student may see the meeting as casual conversation, the principal should not. Each meeting represents an opportunity to serve the four goals outlined above. An agenda will help students and principal stay on task. Students should identify the items for discussion, and the principal should structure them in an agenda.

b. Let the students do the talking. The principal will wish to pass information to the classroom communities at the school community meeting, but the primary rationale for the meeting is to give students a forum. The principal assumes the role of prober ("I'm not sure what you're telling us. Please explain some more." "What makes that unfair?" "Why do you think that is the best course of action? Does anyone know some other actions we should consider?") and focuser ("I understand that many people feel that we should not have peanut butter so often, but I don't think that is the problem we are trying to solve. John said that the cafeteria is so noisy that people don't want to eat there.")

c. Use the school community meetings to educate students about the operation of the school. Students who participate in classroom communities quickly learn to distinquish between the rules and procedures of the classroom and those of the school. At the school level, such distinctions become more complex. The school community meeting represents an appropriate place to teach students about the levels of administration in a school district and their responsibilities. Similarly, issues of concern to students will offer opportunities to learn about the different roles of those who work in the school district and those who have contact with the district. For example, a discussion of school bus procedures or problems opens the door to an examination of the roles of drivers, responsibility of teachers and aids in bus loading and unloading, the place of maintenance personnel in the school system, district-level administration of transportation matters, and the role of the school board and possibly the state department of education in providing transportation for students.

Such description is deadly dull as casually presented information for most students. Principals should not see the topic of the school bus as an opportunity for a lecture. But students who enter a decision-making process will need information from which to make sound decisions. The principal can supply that information and educate motivated students within the context of a decision-making process.

d. Keep students informed of school year milestones and events. As mentioned above, the community meetings provide an avenue of information flow from principal to student.

e. Follow-up on actions which students request or commitments made. If the principal has made a commitment to take an action or find some information by a certain meeting date, a report of action or progress should be presented on that date. A commitment overlooked represents a commitment of little importance. Not only will this disappoint the student representatives, but it teaches that commitments are not important. As with good teaching and parenting, consistency is the key.

f. Conduct a meeting every week. The student body must know that the principal considers their participation to be essential. This will require discipline from the principal as well as the student. Time becomes precious during certain times of the year, as when weather requires school closings, holiday preparations carve hours from the schedule, and end-of-the-year paperwork requires attention. These considerations notwithstanding, it remains essential that students feel secure in an orderly functioning school environment. The community meeting provides a means to maintain that student feeling. A good rule of thumb is that any week with three days has a community meeting.

Concern: Students Who Question Rules

Many administrators and teachers have voiced discomfort with the creation of communities in the school building and classroom because they fear that it will give their students a device to undermine school rules. Experience suggests that the opposite is true. By reformulating rules in terms which students view as more just gives such rules more strength. Nevertheless, the process which students, teachers, and principals use in confronting, discussing, affirming and revising rules will have an important impact on the effectiveness of the rule. Some of the following techniques may prove helpful in this regard.

a. Define what the rule is. The first step in confronting a rule and whether it is just consists of definition and discussion. Often a student suggestion for a rule change reflects incomplete understanding of the rule. This becomes clear when the student is asked to explain in detail what the rule is. Sometimes the discussion need go no further. It is important that the primary responsibility for definition of the rule be given to the student so that the student understands that the principal is listening.

b. Determine who has first responsibility for the rule. A principal may wish to avoid discussion of classroom rules, such as how students line up to go to the cafeteria or other classroom management devices which the teachers employ. These discussions might better be held in the classroom. At the other end of the spectrum are school laws: "Why do we have to go to school for 180 days?" The principal can make clear that it is worthwhile to discuss such rules, but students should understand that there is little likelihood of changing them. Between those extremes, however, are many rules for

which other people hold responsibility. Students, teachers, and principals should discuss them. "We may or may not be able to change them, but we can talk about them with the people who made them and those who enforce them." The first two definitional steps, then, lay the groundwork for a positive examination of rules.

c. Discuss why the rule exists. Students and principal discuss the specific outcomes desired in positive terms. This is a most important task for solving problems in a rational manner and for encouraging a positive attitude toward the school. Our language patterns play an important role in helping or hindering good communication on problem solving. For example, a discussion which begins, "I just don't see why..." is rarely a productive one. By focusing on positive outcomes in specific terms, discussants take responsibility for the smooth functioning of the school. After taking that responsibility, they can minimize the unacceptable impacts of the rule.

d. Brainstorm alternative routes to the desired outcomes. "What can we do to achieve the ends we want in this rule?"

e. Determine the costs of each alternative. Children and adults alike must learn and relearn that great ideas must exist within the realm of reality. The principal can help students think about this by asking them to list the pros and cons of each alternative.

f. Reaffirm, revise, or change the rule. At this point, the students and principal may agree that the most sensible course of action consists of maintenance of the rule as presently stated with a program of education or student involvement to minimize the negative impacts of the rule. If the consensus indicates that the rule should be

changed or revised, and the principal has the authority to do so, a new rule should be proposed, along with administrative procedures and consequences of violating the rule. The proposed rule should then be placed on a future agenda when it can be discussed with those on whom it may impact. For example, a change in cafeteria rules will affect cafeteria personnel and possibly building custodial personnel as well as students. Students must learn that these people must participate in the review as well.

g. Open lines of communication to higher authority. When a proposed rule change involves authority outside the school building, communication must be established with that authority. Students are capable of discussing school issues with superintendents and board members, but students must understand that such discussion may not result in a change of policy. The student who presents the concerns of fellow students will need help in making that presentation in a nonthreatening way. Similarly, the district-level administrator or board member will need preparation to listen to the student and to respond without intimidating or patronizing.

This final chapter has attempted to extend classroom community concepts to the school level. Principals who wish to engage directly in student social development will find benefits for the school beyond those of student skills. The key to success in the school community is patience. The tasks which the principal asks of students are difficult for many adults. Children will need many opportunities to fail at these tasks in a safe environment. The principal, through patience and encouragement, can nurture the student's conception of justice, encourage attachment to democratic principles, and help the student take responsibility for himself or herself and fellow students.